



The Conservation Strip

John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District

Cost-Share Program Update

In July, the John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District (JMSWCD) began the 2019 Fiscal Year and the new year for the Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share Program (VACS). This year, JMSWCD was given a VACS allocation of nearly \$840,000. As of the September Board of Directors Meeting, \$472,000 remained. There are currently 44 different practices which are eligible for cost-share, ranging from grass filter strips to animal waste control facilities to cover crops to livestock exclusion systems.

All of these practices work to help conserve the soil and water resources

on the land while improving the producer's operation. Two of our most common practices are livestock exclusion and cover crops.

Livestock exclusion BMPs are aimed at reducing streambank erosion and preventing nutrients and bacteria contained in animal manure from entering our waterways. Specifically, this program funds the development of livestock water systems, agricultural stream crossings, and livestock stream exclusion fencing. These projects currently have a cost-share rate of 80%.

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Fall 2018

Mission Statement

Our Mission is to provide leadership, technical assistance, information, and education to the citizens of Fauquier County in proper soil stewardship, agricultural conservation methods, and water quality protection so as to ensure the wise use of the county's natural resources.



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Frost-proof troughs can provide a good alternative to traditional water sources

Cost-Share Program Update Continued...

Cover crops work to reduce erosion of topsoil (and any nutrients contained in the soil) from cropland by keeping a continuous (or near continuous cover) on the land. Cover crops may be harvestable or non-harvestable and can pay up to \$48/acre if early planting dates and rye bonuses are met.

have benefited greatly from this work. Since 1985, this program has protected over 378 miles of stream bank in Fauquier County. This means cleaner local streams and fewer pollutants being sent into the Chesapeake Bay. This is no doubt a positive outcome for all parties involved.

In the end, the ultimate goal of VACS is to protect our rivers and streams from the manure and sediment associated with livestock operations. Local streams

For more information on programs offered by the John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District, please call our office at (540) 347-3120 ext. 3.

FSA Market Facilitation Program

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is providing the Market Facilitation Program (MFP) which offers direct payments to help corn, cotton, sorghum, soybean, wheat, dairy, and hog producers who have been impacted by the implementation of tariffs. Producers can apply for the MFP through January 15, 2019. A payment will be issued on the first 50 percent of the producer's total production of the commodity. In early December, a second payment rate will be announced (if applicable) that will apply to the remaining 50 percent of the producer's production.

\$1.65 per bushel, and Wheat \$0.14 per bushel.

MFP payments are capped at \$125,000 and do not count against other 2014 Farm Bill payment limitations. To be eligible for payment, a producer must be in compliance with highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation provisions. A producer's average adjusted gross income may not exceed \$900,000.

Initial rates are as follows: Cotton \$0.06 per pound, Corn \$0.01 per bushel, Dairy \$0.12 per cwt., Hogs \$8.00 per head, Sorghum \$0.86 per bushel, Soybeans

MFP applications are available online at www.farmers.gov/MFP. Applications can be completed at a local FSA office or submitted electronically either by scanning, emailing, or faxing. For more information, contact the FSA office at 540-347-3120 x2.



New Water Monitoring Application

The John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District has just released a new online application which can be used to look at some of the water monitoring data which has been collected over the past couple of decades.

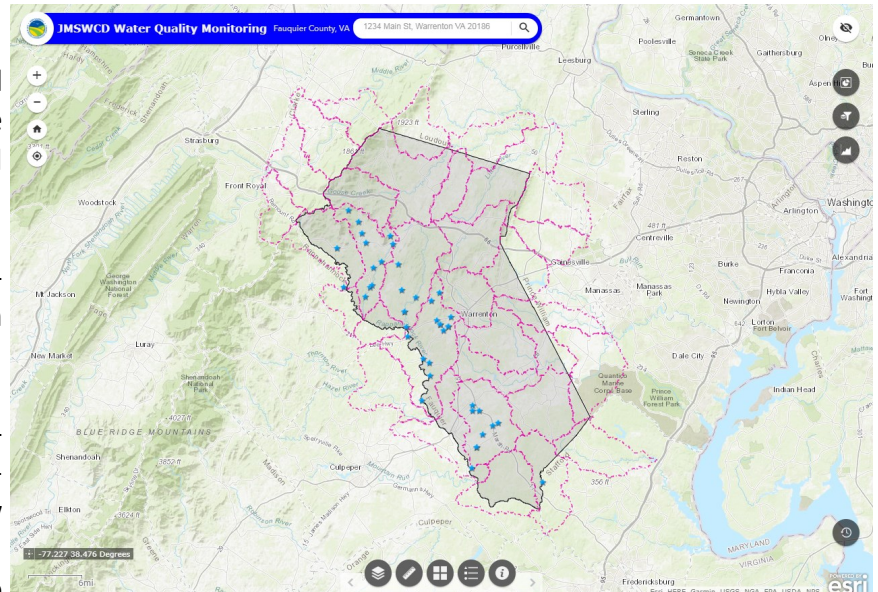
<http://fauquiergis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=29ee86f0c9be4964b5ec7af4ab1ee6b6> or on the JMSWCD website under “Water Quality Monitoring”.

Data for monthly *E. coli* bacteria levels and quarterly benthic macroinvertebrate scores for select watersheds can be found on the site.

The application also shows additional information such as the land use for each watershed as well as watershed sizes.

The data can be filtered to show just certain dates or results. There is also an option to view the data over time to see how it changes.

The application is available for anyone to view at:



A screenshot of the Water Monitoring Application.

FY 2019 NRCS Programs

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is now accepting applications for FY 2019 in Fauquier, Prince William, Loudoun and Fairfax Counties. There are two programs currently being offered: High Tunnel Systems, and the Working Lands for Wildlife (Golden Winged Warbler, American Black Duck, and the Northern Bobwhite) in Working Grasslands.

The first application deadline for these programs is October 19, 2018, and the second deadline is November 2, 2018.

The following are requirements and specifications for these two programs:

To be eligible for a high tunnel system, participants must already be actively cropping in the ground. For

both programs, participants must have records up to date with the Farm Service Agency, have eligible tax ID number, and have control of the land through ownership or lease for life of the contract.



For high tunnels, you will only be eligible for the square footage amount that is already being cropped. It is a per square foot installed payment that cannot exceed \$10,000. You will also need to consider and know the style high tunnel you wish to pursue: gothic (peak roof) or Quonset (rounded roof).

The working land for wildlife practice focuses on grasslands where NRCS will help landowners replace non-native grasses with native grasses, forbs and leg-

John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District

98 Alexandria Pike, Suite 31
Warrenton, VA 20186
(540) 347-3120 x3
johnmarshall.swcd@vaswcd.org

www.johnmarshallswcd.com

Hours: 7:30 am-4:30 pm
Monday-Friday

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FY 2019 NRCS Programs Continued

umes that benefit bobwhite and other wildlife, while creating alternative healthy grazing options for livestock. Habitat restored for the bobwhite benefits many other species, including turkeys, deer, rabbits, gopher tortoises, bog turtles and many different songbirds. For more information on the working land for wildlife please visit:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/plantsanimals/fishwildlife/?cid=nrcseprd1299624>.

To start the application process, contact the Farm Service Agency (540) 347-3120 x2.

Once the application deadline has

passed, the applications will go through a ranking process and applicants will be notified if they are chosen for funding. If selected for funding, the high tunnel must be constructed from a new material kit that meets the wind and snow load requirements for your area (be sure the brand you choose meets these requirements). Researching brands and retailers is recommended. NRCS does not endorse any particular company/retailer or brand.

If you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact Roger Flint or Casey Iames at 540-347-3120 x3 or email roger.flint@va.usda.gov or casey.iames@va.usda.gov.

Calendar of Events

October 8		John Marshall SWCD Office Closed	
October 10	4:00 PM	John Marshall SWCD Board Meeting	JMSWCD Office
November 7	4:00 PM	John Marshall SWCD Board Meeting	JMSWCD Office
November 12		John Marshall SWCD Office Closed	
November 22-23		John Marshall SWCD Office Closed	
December 2-4		VASWCD Annual Meeting	Roanoke, VA
December 19	2:00 PM	John Marshall SWCD Board Meeting	JMSWCD Office
December 24-25		John Marshall SWCD Office Closed	

Staying Connected: The John Marshall SWCD makes it easy to stay connected through social media. If you're on Facebook, "Like" our page to get updates on what's happening at the District.



The Conservation Strip is a quarterly publication of the John Marshall Soil & Water Conservation District. To be added to our email list, please send an email to Wendy Merwin at: wendy.merwin@fauquiercounty.gov.

All programs and services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status.